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TAGS: [ECPS](#) [OTRA](#) [CI](#) [AR](#)
SUBJECT: COUNTRY CLEARANCE APPROVAL FOR AMBASSADOR DAVID A. GROSS

REF: STATE 03598

¶1. Embassy Santiago warmly welcomes and grants country clearance for Ambassador David A. Gross, Coordinator for International Communications and Information Policy, from 01/15/2008 through 01/16/2008, as requested reftel. The purpose of the visit is to meet with Chilean government officials to discuss the U.S.-Chile bilateral relationship, including telecommunications related issues.

¶2. Control Officer for your visit is Jessica Patterson, Political-Economic Officer, telephone numbers: office (56-2) 330-3394, cell (56-9) 139-9093, home (56-2) 335-8104, and fax (56-2) 330-3118. Control Officer can be reached 24 hours a day via Post 1, telephone (56-2) 330-3321/3700. During business hours it is best to reach the Control Officer via the Embassy switchboard (56-2) 330-3000.

¶3. Employees with diplomatic or official passports must obtain diplomatic or official entry visas through a Chilean embassy overseas or CA/PPT/SIA in Washington. Those with tourist passports do not need visas, and may enter on tourist cards filled out on the airplane. Travelers with tourist passports are required to pay a one time fee of \$100.00 U.S. dollars each to enter the country.

¶4. Upon arrival, Ambassador Gross will be met by control officer and expeditor. Lodging has been arranged at the Chief of Mission Residence.

¶5. State Department TDY visitors requiring OpenNet-Plus Systems access during their stay should inform the Control Officer prior to their arrival. Visitors will be required to attend a Systems Security briefing and complete a Network Access Request Form. If visitors wish to access e-mail from their home State Department post, users must provide the ISC with the fully qualified domain name or the TCP/IP address of the TDYer's home e-mail server.

¶6. Personnel who intend to bring U.S. Government portable microcomputers (laptops) for use in CAA or non-CAA areas must notify Post's ISSO and RSO in advance of travel. Personal Electronic Devices (PED), Personal Digital Assistant's (PDA) e.g., 'Palm Pilots', MP-3 players, etc. are NOT authorized in CAA spaces and are not authorized connectivity within OpenNet unclassified or classified networks, or stand-alone

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classified PC's.

¶7. Travelers are reminded that Santiago's Public Affairs Section is responsible for handling all in-country press arrangements for both Mission personnel and official visitors. Media inquiries or requests for interviews made directly to the visitor during the course of a visit should be directed to the Embassy Press Attache, Timothy Stater,

telephone (56-2) 330-3350. Where contact with the media would serve to promote USG interests, Public Affairs will work with visitors prior to their arrival to determine the desired level or arrangements for contact with the press. On-site Public Affairs staff is also available to assist visitors and delegations at meetings where media coverage is anticipated.

¶18. Cash Exchanges: At the airport, Banco Edwards and AFEX (Exchange House) have money exchange facilities located on the ground floor customs area as you leave the terminal. The Embassy has a 24-hour ATM machine, which can access any U.S. account served by the local bank. Currency received will be Chilean pesos at the current rate of exchange. ATMs are located conveniently around Santiago and in other metropolitan areas in Chile. You are urged to bring an ATM card to Post since this is the most convenient (and many times economical) way to change money.

¶19. The Embassy community has a small commissary/gift shop, which is available to official visitors.

¶10. The climate in Chile is temperate, but milder than that of Washington. The seasons in Chile are reversed: Summer (December, January, February) temperatures usually vary between 49 degrees (mornings and evenings) and 85 degrees during the day; Winter (June, July August) temperatures range between a minimum of 38 and maximum of 64. Most precipitation occurs during the winter months. Except for the hottest summer nights, evenings tend to be substantially cooler than the days.

¶11. All areas of Santiago are affected by high pollution, although the area around the Embassy has slightly better air quality than the more congested areas in the city. The pollution appears as heavy smog in the winter and dust in the summer. Pollution levels rise to unacceptable levels an

average of five to six times per year. The major health effects include difficulties with breathing and aggravation of existing respiratory, cardiovascular, allergic and asthmatic problems. This is particularly true for the elderly and children, and for those with confirmed asthmatic and allergic symptoms. Contact-lens wearers sometimes find their eyes are more easily irritated here. The most severe pollution occurs during the months of May to October.

¶12. The intensity of the sun is particularly pronounced in Santiago. Travelers should travel with good sunglasses, hats and sun block if they anticipate spending much time outdoors.

¶13. In order to drive a vehicle in Chile, you must have an international driver's license. Failure to adhere to this may result in arrest and confiscation of the rental vehicle.

¶14. After the terrorist attacks of September 11th, there is currently a very real possibility for violent actions against United States citizens and interests throughout the world. We urge all Embassy personnel and visitors to Chile to maintain a high level of vigilance and to take appropriate steps to reduce potential vulnerability.

¶15. The Embassy has advised in a Warden message to Americans in Chile that extremists in the tri-border area (Brazil, Argentina and Paraguay) may have received instructions in mid-October 2000, to begin efforts to collect information on U.S. business people and government officials in the southern cone of South America. This information would be used to prepare contingency plans for possible kidnappings or attacks in the event terrorists strike in the southern cone. We take this information very seriously. Because of the Embassy's special visibility, we urge all personnel to maintain a high level of vigilance and to take appropriate steps to reduce potential vulnerability.

¶16. Visitors should be aware of the criminal environment in Santiago, which is rated medium for USG employees. Street crime, common to many South American cities, is a problem.

One should be particularly alert in the business/commercial crowded areas. We recommend visitors:

-- Be attentive to your surroundings -- people, vehicles, packages, etc.

-- Maintain a low profile, particularly in busy tourist areas.

-- Vary your routes and times for all required travel.

-- Treat mail or other deliveries from unfamiliar sources with suspicion.

-- Be circumspect about information you provide about yourself to strangers or in the presence of strangers.
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